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ABSTRACT

Designed to assist public relations personnel deal effectively with print and non-print media, this booklet contains guidelines for: (1) analyzing an audience and selecting the appropriate media; (2) developing persuasion techniques; (3) writing for public relations; (4) determining newsworthy events; (5) detailed planning; (6) assessing results; (7) creating professional and interesting news releases; (8) organizing a news conference; (9) placing a feature story; (10) placing print, television, or radio features; (11) creating newsworthy events; (12) getting on radio and television via public service or community calendar announcements, free speech messages, editorials/rebuttals, talk shows, news features, or public affairs shows; and (13) communicating through graphics, i.e., brochures, flyers, posters, calendars, newsletters, annual reports, and slide shows. Samples of two news releases, a fact sheet, two public service announcements, and one public opinion free speech message are included. (JB)

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MEDIA HOW-TO NOTEBOOK

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INTRODUCTION

If you work with, or represent, a community group, and your group wants to get media coverage—or better media coverage—then you must learn to deal with the media. It may be hard to believe, but if you do learn to deal with the media, you'll find that you will gain a measure of control over it. You won't be able to change the basic way media works, nor alter its inherent biases, but you will have an opportunity to influence *what* they say about you, and *how* they perceive your group as a source of information.

But, to influence the media, you must take it seriously, and you must make public relations a central part of your organization, not just a last-minute effort.

Dealing with the media—both press and broadcast—is public relations, and it can be a tricky business. The media sometimes say dreadful things, some of them true, about even the most secure and powerful. After all, it's the unusual—mistakes, disasters, crimes and the bizarre—which constitutes news, not the smooth day-to-day running of an operation. However, you can learn to turn this to your own advantage, and to maximize media coverage of your group; you must actively court the interest of reporters, and you must create and maintain a trust in your integrity. You cannot finagle, bribe, or lie; you can ask, and you can occasionally demand.

To accomplish these tasks within the context of a group, you must appoint a permanent media person who knows about your group and who is willing to learn about the media and to make him or herself known to them.

Your media person must be in agreement with the aims of your group, be knowledgeable about your programs, able to gather consistent speakers and to convey reliable information about your efforts. He or she must also be in close touch with the leadership of your group and be immediately informed of periodic decisions; it is disastrous public relations to have your group decide on one thing and for the media to learn something else. Your person should also be an adept communicator who can speak and write clearly and well. It helps if he or she can type, dial a phone, use a copier and find the way to the Post Office; but those things can be learned. Beyond that, the secret is planning, both personal and organizational.

GOALS

An effective PR campaign relies on widespread and/or consistent coverage. One Big Story helps, but it's not likely you'll get that big one unless you do the work of identifying yourself as a good news source: reliable, provocative, and interesting. To most of the news media, your point of view is much less relevant than the fact that you *are* news. And, the news media does not always go out and look for

stories—they are brought to the media by PR people. The stories you will offer to the news media will depend upon your PR goals. Thus, defining your goals is the first step in assembling a PR plan for your group.

1. What do you want to accomplish with PR? The more specific you can be, the better. Prioritize what needs to be known. For instance:
 - a. Recognition of your existence.
 - b. Spotlight a particular injustice.
 - c. Let potential clients or donors know about your services.
 - d. Raise funds for the creation of an institution or your program.
 - e. Publicize an upcoming event.
2. Determine two or three things you want to make known about your organization (e.g. your service, localized staff, your reliability or longevity). Repeat these facts—and the name, address, and phone number of your group—in all of your PR releases.
3. In order to determine your PR goals, interview your principals and activists to discover their own priorities and what they agree about. It's important to choose as a PR goal a matter of consensus and not a contested or divisive issue within the group. All organizations have feuds, but you don't have to publicize them.

AUDIENCE AND MEDIA

Having decided what it is you want to say, you must then decide whom you wish to reach. If it's just the members of your own organization, it may be best to leave the public media out of your PR effort and concentrate on internal mailings and phone trees. But, if you want to expand your membership or gain governmental support for your efforts, you must identify your audience and use the appropriate medium.

If you want everyone to know, you pull out all stops and try for maximum coverage, but most likely this is neither necessary or realistic. First determine your audience by their obvious, salient characteristics:

1. Age
2. Sex
3. Income
4. Race
5. Work habits
6. Union or social connections
7. Geographic area
8. Number of people involved.

Your next step is to compile a media list. This is an important first

step in successful publicity work. Your media person should actually develop several lists—each used for different audiences—and should keep them updated and amended where necessary.

A good media list contains more than just the names of the publications and stations and their phone numbers. Since few events will go out to all media, it helps to have as much pertinent information about your media contacts on hand as can be. Some of the information to include:

1. What are the deadlines?
2. Are photographs accepted? If so, what size? (print media)
3. Is feature material written by someone not on the newspaper or magazine's staff accepted?
4. How far in advance are guests booked for interview programs? (radio/television)

This will enable you to make wise decisions as to who gets what.

There are probably more media than you ever noticed, and it would do well to check them all out, even if you eventually settle on a smaller number. Be sure to check the following:

1. Daily papers. List the city editors and section editors. Later you can add the names of sympathetic reporters. Be sure to check suburban dailies as well as monopolistic big-city ones.
2. Magazines. Local ones, plus national magazines that include your sphere of interest.
3. The wire services. These have listings, called the Daybook, of all coming events of importance, and all major papers subscribe to at least one wire service.
4. Newsletters. Most large churches and labor unions have weekly or monthly newsletters which their members read.
5. College newspapers. These are often daily and widely read.
6. Alternative papers.
7. Television stations. Besides the address and phone number, find the names of the current news director, assignment editor, and producers of any specific shows that might be of help. Be sure to include UHF specialty and general channels as well as large network ones.
8. Radio stations. Same as television. Be sure to check out foreign-language stations if they broadcast to part of your audience.

Try to obtain as much data as is reasonably possible about the nature of the media organizations and the people involved. Talk to the editors, producers and interviewers and derive a working impression of them. Are they sympathetic or in opposition? You have the right to present any kind of point of view, but if time is of the essence, it often pays to go to those who will cut through the red tape and will assist, rather than oppose, where possible. Ask around. Pay attention.

Note the formats, broadcasting hours and types of public service announcements, free speech messages, community calendars and editorials.

Your final step is, obviously, to match the medium and the audience. Sometimes this is easy to determine: you don't reach senior citizens in rock music magazines. At other times, it takes more research: big city minority audiences, for instance, may read proportionately fewer newspapers and get more news from radio and TV. You will develop a feel for it as you go along.

PERSUASION THEORY AND HOW TO USE IT

There is no comprehensive and infallible dogma on how to persuade others, either in or out of the media, but there are a number of axioms which you ought to consider carefully. These apply to virtually any message whether commercial, political, or purely social:

1. Do Not Appeal To Fears. Fears, unless associated with something concrete and immediate, are quickly and gladly forgotten. A loan shark can use fear to compel action, but all the media can usually create with fear is anxiety and irritation.
2. Always Exhort People To Action. Rather than creating feelings of guilt for past abuses, or actions not taken, request actions—even small and symbolic ones. For instance:
 - a. Come to our Street Fair.
 - b. Write your representative.
 - c. Call a friend about this issue.
3. Use plain English and avoid words which, through usage, have become inflammatory, rhetorical, or irritating. Avoid judgment where possible. The SLA, for example, coerced media time and devoted it to windy parodies of European Marxism. If you say, "Death to the Fascist insect that preys on the people," it's even money that many people will assume you're an ad for Raid. The rest will think you're fools.
4. Unless you're appealing to children, address your audience as adults capable of making decisions and distinctions. Even the sellers of detergent don't say, "Only a jerk would buy Brand X." They show people making a thoughtful decision after looking at several boxes.
5. Persuade people of your credibility. Do so by stating your accomplishments, noting your allies, keeping your appeal broad, and generally speaking as a substantial member of the community rather than as an outcast.
6. Above all, be positive and not negative. Do not even acknowledge your past failures, unless questioned about them. Approach each issue with a positive appeal. Make it seem, even if you are on the defensive, that you are taking the initiative.

WRITING FOR PR

In order to use the above axioms effectively, you must be able to write. There are different kinds of writing, of course, and you must learn the elements of news writing and practice them until you can master them. Basically, they are these:

1. Use short, declarative and action verbs.
2. Use short paragraphs. Look at newspaper stories to see how these can be used. Always include Who, What, Where, When and Why.
3. Put your information in the form of an inverted pyramid: The most important information in the first paragraph and so on. Then, if it is arbitrarily cut, the most important information is retained.
4. Each story (message, news release, letter) has a logical beginning, middle and end.
5. Make the message clear to the uninformed reader or listener.
6. Careful repetition can bring home your point. As one journalism teacher told his class: "Tell 'em what you're gonna tell 'em; tell 'em; then, tell 'em what you told them."

CARE AND FEEDING OF THE MEDIA

Relations with the media, like those with individuals, change constantly and are occasionally unpredictable. But, they do come down to two final determinants: Are you newsworthy and trustworthy? It's all well and good to be on the right side of important issues, but that doesn't necessarily translate into news. What does?

One anecdotal example is a stunt (of the sort that few publicists would attempt): An adept San Francisco PR woman was saddled with the job of publicizing vital information about the World Food Crisis for a group that had failed to get any air or press time. So she sent a news release to all major news outlets announcing that a remarkable breakthrough in the fight against world hunger would be unveiled at a press conference. When the press assembled, a curtain was reverently drawn back by a white-coated scientist, and an actor in a chicken suit began running around the stage, spitting eggs into the air. After the stares turned to laughter, the publicist announced that fun was fun, but the facts on world hunger were important to everyone.

As a publicist, your task is to take complex (and sometimes chronic) situations and change them into news. This requires imagination, and sometimes daring; although you should be wary of using stunts unless you are *certain* that you can control what will happen.

What exactly is newsworthy?

1. Actions in the form of events.

2. Actions that are unusual (Man bites Dog), funny (Giant chicken spits eggs), dramatized, or of human interest.
3. Variations on a theme that is already in the news (A new twist to the Mother's March).
4. The accomplishments of your group, if they represent a change or announced change. (The Major Now Supports Our Position. We were a Block Organization; Now We Have 500 Members. Senator X Has Given Us Three Hearings Before Voting on SB 8990).
5. Stories fitted to the format of a particular show or publication. The Sunday paper runs many stories that are not breaking stories. Check magazines and public affairs programs.

Public relations and the news media are effective in certain ways, but it's important to keep in mind what you *can't* do with PR:

1. You can't pull frequent and/or unexplained changes in announced policy or direction. Organizations can't do that and be taken seriously—even though individuals do it a dozen times a week.
2. You can't get caught lying to the press, which for the most part, means you can't lie. This doesn't mean you have to answer all their questions, or that you have to talk off the top of your head, or give a position on something just because they've asked for one. But, do not say one thing that can *possibly* be proven untrue. In addition, do not violate confidences and do not go "off the record" with anything you wouldn't want "on the record."
3. You can't rely on the press to do your work for you. While a good movie director or cinematographer can make an ordinary conversation into a dramatic scene, don't expect a TV crew or working reporter to do so; they have neither the time nor the desire. Provide them with visuals and try to *show*, not *say*.
4. You can't be unreliable. You must be there with the goods, call when you say you will, provide what you must, and meet your responsibilities. Maybe the big corporations and Hollywood studios can woo the press with dinners, junkets, glamor and freebies, but all you have is your integrity.

DETAILED PLANNING

You will find, in the following chapters, the components of a PR campaign . . . the tools of the trade. But, to know the tools isn't enough; you must know how and when to use them. Your resources are limited and you must decide what, and how much, to use, and when to use them. Your PR person, with your group's leadership, must determine how your group's resources will be allocated for PR.

You can start a PR campaign today by assessing your group's goals and by beginning to learn about the media you wish to use.

Your PR person can meet with newspaper and TV people, find out about their coverage, deadlines, programming, range of operations, circulation and biases. You can begin to read newspapers with an eye to the kind of stories you might want done on your group. In short, look for anything that will enable you to make an intelligent choice of media, based on facts and probabilities, rather than on hope and blind luck.

However, a brilliantly orchestrated demonstration or media event can be reduced to a short line on page 14 simply because of an accident, a dramatic change of personnel in government, or for any of a thousand reasons, none of which can be predicted. But, persistence will prevail, and that, rather than initial results, is how to evaluate your success in PR.

ASSESSING RESULTS

It is necessary to develop a way, or ways, to monitor your success at PR. In other words, are your efforts resulting in more press and broadcasts about your group? Here are a few ways to keep track of this:

1. Keep clippings of any stories about your group; ask your members to send you clips of any stories they notice.
2. Ask people to *do* something—join up, write for information, call for requests—and count the number of responses.
3. Watch for related stories—things your speakers might be qualified to comment about.
4. Ask your group members to look for TV stories and listen for radio reports that mention your group. Have them let you know.
5. Ask friendly reporters and editors to tip you off when your story is coming up.
6. Pay for a clipping service, if you can afford it. They will do more complete work, (but your members may pay less attention than if they had to do the clipping themselves).

Sometimes the results of a media effort are very obvious. The Rev. Jesse Jackson, a brilliant media strategist, had requested HEW funding for a program motivating disadvantaged children to buckle down and study, but found the request hopelessly mired in the HEW. Then *60 Minutes* featured a report on Jackson's program, which was operating experimentally in Los Angeles, Chicago and Kansas City. Senator Hubert Humphrey and HEW Secretary Joseph Califano Jr. both happened to see the *60 Minutes* broadcast and were so impressed that within days Califano announced a \$45,000 HEW grant to Jackson's program. Obviously the same sequence of events can take place at lesser levels of government.

Your good publicity can be as much an internal morale booster as it is a means of relating to the public. Reproduce your clippings and

circulate them to your members, to prospective members, and to the public through your mailing list; make reports of radio or TV appearances and do the same with these. Announce achievements at your board meetings, and keep the staff and leadership apprised of your successes. If you've placed a particularly good story, you can have the clip blown up (like theaters and restaurants do with good reviews), and set it up where members and visitors can see it. And on bad days, you can look back through the files of clippings to remember what a good job you have done.

Eventually, you will want to assess what overall effect, if any, all this coverage has had. While there is a tendency for people to overestimate the power of the media to directly influence events or deeply-held opinions, the effects of a good media campaign can be crucial to your organizational efforts.

It's worth knowing what the media can do; it can give recognition to a fact, an issue, an organization. But, action rarely comes about simply because the media spotlight is turned on. Media action must be coordinated with, but supplementary to, organizing.

PLACING STORIES

For the average person, the print media tends to be supplementary to TV as a source of national and international news, but on local issues this may not be the case. The fact is that the press, whether daily or weekly papers, or magazines, reaches a more select, and generally more interested, audience than either radio or TV. Your group must decide which audience is to be reached and when.

There is, in addition, a ripple effect in the media community. A story in one medium will often generate interest throughout. If you have decided that effective publicity is important to the functioning of your group, then you cannot become too familiar with the media. Knowing which paper, which magazine, which TV or radio news or feature show, and whom to contact in each of these, is of paramount importance. Read, listen, and watch. It may turn you into a media freak, but the results will most likely pay off. When your media goal has been reached, you can hie yourself off to Katmandu for awhile and cool out, but for now, pay attention!

There are standard procedures and methods which are essential to know, nearly by rote, before you can begin to exercise your imagination. The basic tools of the trade are these:

1. The News Release
 - a. Announcements
 - b. Calendar Listings
 - c. Biography/History packets
 - d. Feature outlines
 - e. Interview suggestions
2. The News Conference
 - a. The press packet
 - b. The presentation
3. Features and Non-News Items
 - a. Newspaper and magazine stories
 - b. Column items
 - c. Letters to the editor
 - d. Guest Editorials

THE NEWS RELEASE

The image of the daring, hard-digging, investigative newshawk is sometimes illusory, despite what you may have gleaned from TV series. Much news is fed to the media by publicists, as stories, as news leads, or as exclusive tips. An assignment editor on a big-city daily often receives literally hundreds of news leads *each day*. Most of these leads arrive in the form of news releases.

As a PR person, you have two tasks: to make your release look professional (i.e. trustworthy), and to make the release interesting enough to stand out from the mob.

A news release is raw information in printed form. While there are wise and unwise ways of submitting releases, nearly anything *can* be material for a news release. Basically, though, there are three kinds of releases:

1. A statement which can be used as a short news item.
 - a. A calendar listing (something is going to happen).
 - b. An announcement of an event, an appointment, a donation, etc.
 - c. A service you are offering.
 - d. Results of your recent research.
 - e. The opening of a new facility or service.
 - f. Endorsement or support of a well-known person.

The best news release in this genre will be the announcement of something unusual, even sensational. The announcement of even a large building is rather ho-hum, but the discovery that there are rodent hairs in baby food is startling, particularly if you can prove it conclusively. (See Sample).

2. A teaser for a media event. That is, something will happen and why it will be interesting (e.g. The Mayor will explain why he is resigning). (See Sample).
3. A backgrounder. A release which might provoke a reporter into digging out a story or feature.

A news release should be typed on letterhead stationery; the cost is not excessive and well worth the investment. It should be double-spaced and clean copy. The format is standard.

1. At the top of the page, write either: **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** (and the date you are sending it), or: **FOR RELEASE AFTER** (and the date).
2. Either opposite the release date or slightly below it, write: **For Additional Information Contact:** here put your name and a phone number (day and night numbers, if necessary).
3. Below this, type your heading. It should be typed all in capitals and should summarize your story. Use one or more verbs in the headline, as newspaper headlines do.
4. The body of the release should be as follows:
 - a. Double-spaced, on one side of the page, with wide margins.
 - b. The lead paragraph explains the story and contains the most important information. Your first paragraph should answer the questions: Who, What, When and Where. The other pertinent questions—Why and So What—would go into the subsequent paragraphs. Above all, do not waste words in a news release.
 - c. One single page is best, but if you must go to two pages, all primary information should be on the first page, with bio or addenda on the second sheet.
 - d. If you go to a second page, write *more* at the bottom of the

first, and number the second page. At the end of the release type either -30- or #####.

- e. Maintain a tone of neutrality throughout. Do not use rhetoric unless you are quoting someone. Save the editorializing for your editorials.
- f. You can include as attachments to your release, materials such as: biographies, reproduced documents, the text of a statement and even previous news clippings.
- g. Photographs. If you have good photos, you can send them out with releases, with some reservations. First, large papers are more likely to want their own photos, except perhaps in their arts section. Small papers, which don't have the staff for shooting many photos, often use PR pictures. For publication purposes, follow these pointers for photographs:

Submit black and white photographs, printed on glossy stock and measuring either 5x7" or 8x10". Unless you are working with a magazine which utilizes color, you will have little reason to use color photographs for publication purposes.

Be imaginative. Avoid check-passings and handshake photographs. Some papers will refuse to run these photographs because they have little visual impact. Action photographs are always more interesting.

Tell a story.

Aim for two or three people, maximum. Be tied to the organization program; it can't be just a portrait.

Be eye-catching: kids, animals and old people are always good; all three are best.

Use a caption to identify all persons as they appear in the photographs, starting from left to right. Also explain what is happening.

Photo captions are written on a half sheet of regular 8½x11" paper and taped to the back side of the photograph. The caption is then folded over the end of the photograph so it does not extend beyond the photograph itself.

The layout of a caption is similar to that of a news release.

Photographs to be mailed should have a piece of lightweight cardboard in the envelope to prevent folding enroute.

If a photograph accompanies a news release (example: a portrait shot of your new board chairman) print the person's name on the reverse side of the photograph using the margin area. If the photo and release become separated, such identification becomes invaluable.

For large papers, you can include a *photo alert*, to inform the media of good photo opportunities that will occur at your press conference or event.

WHEN TO CALL A NEWS CONFERENCE

There are plenty of news conferences called and all too many of them are barely worth the effort. So, if your group decides to call one, make sure you have something worth telling; you probably won't get much coverage on your second one if the first was a bust. Of course, even the first may not draw as heavily as you wish, but that can be minimized by careful planning.

Call a news conference for the following reasons:

1. When the news you have to deliver is more complex, *and* of greater importance, than can be dealt with in a regular news release. For instance, the release of a book detailing charges against an institution usually requires some explanation; the chances that many news people would read the entire thing is minimal, unless you stir some interest through a news conference. In addition, a news conference provides the opportunity to answer questions that reporters may have—sometimes a mixed blessing.
2. Even a relatively simple bit of news can be given added focus if you hold a news conference in a symbolic or dramatic location. To detail a slumlord's neglect in a release can be news, but to do so in front of one of his or her decaying buildings . . . that's News.
3. Any kind of news, providing it really *is* news, will attract more attention if it's presented by a celebrity. It may be deplorable, but when Jane Fonda espouses a cause, people listen more intently than when someone unknown does. Of course, you run the risk of having the attention turn to the personality of the celebrity rather than to the issue. Use celebrities carefully, in moderation: if one celebrity is good, three may be a disaster and disperse the focus of your issue entirely.
4. Your news may be your group's reaction to a certain ruling or stand. It is more effective to show personal and collective reaction in person than in a letter. This can be dramatized or symbolized; the pouring of blood; the dumping of chemical wastes; a statement of a victim.

HOW TO CALL A NEWS CONFERENCE

If you have decided that a news conference is appropriate and necessary, take these steps:

1. Two weeks before:
 - a. Find a suitable location. It ought to be centrally located unless you are holding the conference at the site of an action with lots of people; busy reporters will rarely travel far for anything less than a President. It must be accessible for heavy TV equipment, which means the room should have a

wide door and big elevator (if upstairs). You will also need wiring that can handle TV equipment (bring extra fuses); check with the building engineer for an OK on this last specification. The room needs aisle space but ought not to be cavernous or it will distort the sound and make the crowd seem puny. There should be pay phones nearby and bathrooms close to the room. Be sure to post signs in and outside the building directing the media to the right room. Make pencils and paper available.

- b. Send out your first media advisory noting the time, location, and importance of your news conference. Midweek at 10:00 am is the optimal time to hold an event: afternoons mean your news won't make the evening TV news or afternoon paper, or may be bumped for a more important event.
 - c. Prepare your media packet. This is an assortment of information that supplements the material to be covered at the news conference. It explains and reviews both your agenda and related items. The media packet usually contains:
 - 1) The original news release
 - 2) The outline of the conference agenda and speakers
 - 3) A backgrounder
 - 4) Interview suggestions
 - 5) Biographies
 - 6) Photos or photo alert
 - 7) Prepared statements. The ones read at the conference and supporting statements or endorsements.
2. The day before:
- a. Place follow-up phone calls to all those who received news releases to remind them of the event and see who is coming. Use a soft-sell; don't try to browbeat or guilt-trip editors into sending out reporters; just tell them of the importance of the event and let them make up their minds.
 - b. Practice. Have all your speakers run through their prepared material. Ask them to state their most important points in 30 seconds, in case they need to deliver additional radio or TV interviews after the main conference. Test the speakers with all possible questions, friendly and hostile or embarrassing. There are a number of rules that your speakers should follow:
 - 1) Make sure all speakers are prepared, know which points they will make and when to stop talking (5 minutes each is maximum).
 - 2) Make sure they *sound* prepared. Many an expert becomes rattled in the face of hostile questioning.
 - 3) Choose people who won't allow themselves to be baited by the press. Not all reporters are hostile, but many use

probing (i.e. nasty) questions to provoke an angry, and hence, more sensational account of the conference. If you can choose interesting, representative, or locally important people, that's a plus.

3. The day of the conference:

- a. Arrive an hour early and begin working on the physical plant.
 - 1) Post signs.
 - 2) Set up tables near the door and at the speaker's platform.
 - 3) Get the media kits near the door of the room.
 - 4) Get coffee and donuts, if possible.
- b. At the beginning.
 - 1) Have your people hand out media kits.
 - 2) Ask reporters to sign in, with name of organization.
 - 3) Have enough of your people remain present to make the conference look peopled.
 - 4) Wait just ten minutes for late arrivals, and start your presentation. Don't penalize those who came on time.
- c. At the end
 - 1) Have speakers available for individual radio and TV interviews.
 - 2) Call no-shows among the media and be ready to make a statement over the phone. Many radio stations accept phone-ins.
 - 3) Clean up.
 - 4) Keep informed people at the phone numbers you have listed on the press release to answer questions from reporters or editors.
 - 5) Take yourself seriously. If you've planned your statements and the conference well, there is no need to let the media push you around. Be firm but graceful. If, for instance, you have two speakers and the cameramen ask you to choose one, say that *both* will talk, but have them sit close enough together to allow them their shot.

If you're calling a news conference, it's because you have something important to say and you know that this is the best way to present it. If you've planned, practiced and prepared; if you've got accurate, interesting speakers and good accompanying material, you've got reason to expect to be taken seriously by the media, too.

PLACING A FEATURE STORY

Feature stories can be exceedingly helpful to a media campaign. You can reproduce them to send to other media, causing the "ripple" effect; you can also send them to your membership, if the stories are positive, which is a boost to morale.

Features contain background, color and tend to humanize the events that constitute the news. But, because they are one person's choice of facts and observations they are inherently more biased than straight news stories. Be careful! Know what you want to get across and avoid showing your dirty linen. It may *seem* like a good idea to have a feature done on your group, but even with careful planning, there is no assurance that the picture will be flattering. Of course, your courtesy and assistance to a reporter may help matters.

Occasionally, you can write a feature about your group that will be used as-is. More often, a publication is more agreeable to having its staff writer or freelancer do a story about your group or issue. This means, of course, that you have much less control over the kind of information which comes out, even though you may have a better chance of having a story done.

Placing features is less hit-or-miss than news. If you have researched the field carefully, you will find that certain magazines and TV shows concentrate on specific kinds of stories. Some magazines are very specific and if they have an interest in your field, then approach them. If you represent a tenants' organizing group, you're more likely to be written up in *Apartment Life* than in *Harper's* or *California*, although the bias may not be exactly what you want. The same goes for TV feature shows.

To interest a reporter or writer in your story requires both a good story, preferably with an unusual angle, and a nice approach. In any case, make notes on the subject *before* you call or write. As with all PR, you should determine what you *want* to communicate about your organization.

It helps greatly to offer the writer an exclusive angle. It also helps to offer the story to a reporter who has covered your news conferences or has written a news story about you; he or she will have some idea of what you are about, and you will have some idea of the reporter's biases. In making your pitch, describe one angle of the story which may have broad appeal to the *reporter's* audience. This isn't a news release, so the letter or call can make more than one point about your organization and a letter may be as much as two full pages in length. Don't be pushy; the writer will do the story if it's beneficial to him/her. (It's OK to query more than one writer about a story, stressing different angles to each).

If you get some sort of positive response from the writer, you can offer to help in several ways, although many writers resent being crowded or directed too much. You can line up sources for the writer and schedule them at 1/2-hour or hour intervals. If the reporter wants assistance, ask what kind of sources the writer needs and try to offer balance and color to the story.

PLACING FEATURES IN PRINT

Whether you write a feature yourself, or have someone else write it, be adventurous in placing it. There may be only two wire services and two daily papers in a big city, but there are dozens of suburban dailies and campus papers, and hundreds of magazines, local and national, which could use your story. Your chances at each one are small, so above all, don't give up. If a story is picked up by one small magazine, it may show up in many papers through syndication, or an editor may see the news value and suggest that a reporter do a follow-up.

PLACING TV OR RADIO FEATURES

Television and radio features require a somewhat different approach since you usually can't do them yourself. But, there *are* markets for them. Besides the local news shows, which generally use one or more features per broadcast, there has been an increase in the TV and radio and magazine format, in the mode of *60 Minutes*.

Here, too, you should prepare notes, detailing what you want to tell and listing your news sources. Then, call either the reporter or the producer of the show you are interested in and make an appointment to see them. If they reply that all requests must come in writing, do so in the best form you can muster, and after an appropriate length of time, call again.

It pays to be familiar with the shows: who does what kind of stories and when. Keep in mind that air time is limited and the expense of producing a segment of a feature show is much greater than put forth for a magazine or newspaper. But also keep in mind what a San Francisco Chronicle columnist said recently: a press agent is generally the one who does the work a reporter should have done—bringing the story to the media. You're not just doing reporters a favor by suggesting a good story; you're making the show for them.

You can sometimes do radio or TV features for public television, for public radio or for syndication. Such programming requires sustained effort, technical know-how (or advice), and reaches a relatively select audience.

PLACING A SHORT ITEM

There are a number of ways to get your organization into the paper other than as the subject of a news story or feature. Many newsy items are too small to require a whole story, but are still worth mentioning. Often, these wind up in columns, or as fillers. And there are other sections of the paper, such as on the editorial page, where you can appear without necessarily having made news.

1. Calendar listings. All newspapers publish lists of coming events; it's one reason people buy papers. There are a number

of outlets where you can list your event for free:

- a. Daily papers
 - b. Weekly papers
 - c. Neighborhood and college papers
 - d. Local magazines and "throw-away" merchandising publications
 - e. Or, you can distribute your own organizational calendar. This is worth considering if you hold a lot of events, and have a decent mailing list.
2. Letters to the Editor. Many newswriters will admit that the best writing in the paper is in the letters to the editor. Certainly they are widely-read, and can reflect *exactly* your point of view. They are occasionally edited, for space and not for content. Limit yourself to three one-sentence paragraphs, and always tie the letter to something current that readers will be at least passingly familiar with. In the last paragraph, ask the reader to *do* something: write, call, protest, attend.
 3. Guest Editorials. Many papers have articles of opinion by other than staff editorial writers, usually on what is known as the Op-Ed page (opposite editorial). If you can convince the editorial editor to let you have the space, follow this plan:
 - a. State the subject under controversy.
 - b. Answer your opponent's strongest argument.
 - c. Be persuasive as possible about your own position
 - d. Ask the reader to do something: write, call, protest, attend.
 - e. Get the highest person in your organization to sign the editorial under his or her own name.
 4. Columns. Columnists use dozens of items a week; sometimes hundreds. And, popular columnists, are often read more thoroughly, by more people, than most of the news. If you supply items which are interesting, funny or appropriate, you may become a resource for a columnist. Resort to columnists when the item is not worth the effort of a news release or a news conference, although you can add either of those by distributing tidbits of information to the columnists. If you want to have an item used, write it out first and then call it in. Keep it short and pithy. For instance: "An unexpected visitor showed up at the Greenpeace convention here last night. Flipper, the dolphin, entertained the delegates for two hours with stories and sea chanties." Let the columnist put in his own punchline.
 5. News tip. Sometimes a fast-breaking story that concerns your organization, directly or indirectly, can be given to a reporter you know to be sympathetic to your cause. It may be happening too fast for you to use a news release, or even a column item, but it could be a big story.

CREATING EVENTS

Sometimes you can attract more media attention from a staged event than you can from a real event of genuine importance to many people. While that may be unfair, you can make a media event fun; staged events can be imaginative (and the best ones are very imaginative) and reporters usually enjoy covering them. The following list is only partial, but it can offer you ideas for your own event:

1. Hold a benefit concert or art show with donated talent.
 2. Announce the opening of your new service or building by flying a balloon over the city.
 3. Hold a walkathon, a race, or any sort of contest to publicize your cause and to raise money.
 4. Get a famous person to visit either your offices or the subject of your concern (slums, a hospital, etc.)
 5. Hold a public formal dinner, with food prepared on a welfare budget.
 6. Give or get a proclamation from a high-ranking official. Have this day declared "X Day."
 7. Stage a costume skit in front of city hall parodying a decision.
- There is no end to the possibilities.

GETTING ON RADIO AND TV

In many important ways, dealing with radio and TV is no different from dealing with print media; you must discover the rules, find the right person and apply firm but subtle pressure until you have either reached your objective or exhausted the possibilities.

A bit of background may help. In theory, the Federal Communications Act of 1933 decreed that the public owns the airwaves and that all radio and TV stations simply *lease* a particular bank of the electromagnetic spectrum for a period of (usually) three years. The government, through the FCC, can, and does, regulate the use of the airwaves. While the FCC often seems to act as a lobbyist for the corporate groups which own most of the broadcasting stations, it can, if pushed, act on behalf of the community or segments thereof. The 1933 Act says that broadcasters must "serve the public interest, convenience and necessity." Exactly *how* they must do this is not spelled out, but a series of rulings and court decisions make it clear that stations must provide some free time to "the public." Presumably, this is you.

How much time a station makes available to the public varies. A failure to provide time *can* result in a station's loss of license, although it rarely does. But, it's in your interest to know that stations will go to great lengths to avoid challenges on this issue. Few stations are more public-spirited than others but they are all looking to satisfy FCC requirements at the lowest cost, with the least possible rocking of the boat. The person in charge of this balancing act is usually the Public Service Director. Your own balancing act is to sympathize with that person's position, while quietly insisting on your own rights to access. This is best accomplished by knowing what the station does provide and whom they reach.

There are three "easy access" formats that you may find to your advantage: public service announcements, community calendar announcements, and editorials/rebuttals. You may also try to work your message into the regular programming (talk shows, news features, public affairs shows) although the station is under no legal obligation to provide you with regular program time.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

A public service announcement is really a non-commercial commercial, and both radio and TV stations regularly air a good many of these. On network TV, you're up against some stiff competition—mainly PSAs produced by the Advertising Council, the public service arm of the Ad Industry. At local stations, and virtually all radio stations, you have as good a chance as the next group of having your message aired. PSAs are an essential part of

most media campaigns, and good ones can have a measurable impact
* on the public.

The general rules governing PSAs are fairly simple:

- A. You must be a non-profit group, a community service organization, or governmental agency.
- B. Your announcement must include an identification of your group.
- C. There must be absolutely no commercial reference made.
- D. You must submit PSAs *at least two weeks* prior to the time you wish them to be aired.

In order to maximize your chances of having *your* PSA run, approach the matter in the following way:

1. Make an in-person appeal to the person in charge of PSAs; do not mail your sample yet. Find out who is in charge of PSAs, make an appointment to see him or her (and keep it). Be persistent and do not be put off. Bring your message with you and be prepared to explain to the PSA director why it is important that the public hear your message. Be courteous; do not begin by stating a recent court ruling. Stations are obligated to grant access to community groups, but *they* may choose the groups.
2. Know what you want to say and to whom. Determine your audience beforehand. Ask people to do something (join; call for information; take a position on an issue). Mention the name of your organization at least twice, the phone number at least twice and your issue once or twice as well.
3. There are three kinds of PSAs you may submit—and all require work and advance planning. Depending on the rules of the station, you will have from 25-150 words to get your message across, so this is no time to be literary. Gimmicky or cute messages will probably be refused out of hand. Choose your method but be prepared to be flexible.
4. Because you have a short time to use in a PSA (generally 10-30 seconds), make every word count. To make certain your message fills the allotted time, you need to count your words.

Basically:

10 seconds 20 words

20 seconds 50 words

30 seconds 75 words

60 seconds 150 words

5. The guidelines for PSA spots include:

Use upper and lower case typing for all copy.

Submit all copy at least 15 days prior to the date you wish it to air.

Use one page for each announcement.

Make certain each page of copy contains a contact name,

phone number and the name of your organization.

Include dates to start use and to stop use of the copy (example: "Start use: June 9" and "Stop use: August 15").

Stop date on copy must be the day before a dated event.

For radio and television, write as you would speak. This is usually in a more relaxed manner than copy for the print media.

Do not use ". . ." to indicate a pause.

Do not try to record your spot copy on home tape recorders. Broadcast standards require the use of high quality, professional equipment.

Double space copy on 8½x11" white bond paper. Do not use onion skin paper because it rattles.

Do not abbreviate numbers, names or hyphenate copy.

Keep your sentences short and natural, so each can comfortably be read in one breath.

When using difficult names, follow the word with a phonetic spelling in parenthesis (example: Susquhanna (sus-kwha-han-na)).

When referring to days of the month, use "th," "nd," and "st".

Do not start a sentence with an unknown name. Instead, use an identifying title or phrase (example: "XYZ Board President Marvis Anderson invites you . . .").

Do not fold several sheets of copy separately, or staple copy.

Preferably, send announcements flat and unfolded in a 9x12" envelope.

Do not mention prizes to be given away or drawings of any kind in the copy.

Always label the tape box and the reel.

6. Written script and slides. You can have visuals with your live copy if you prepare a color slide (in *horizontal* format for the TV screen) which will be shown while your message is run. A slide with your organization's name and logo will help identify you. Slide guidelines include:

- Use only standard 35mm slides of professional quality, mounted in glass and composed horizontally.

- Colors should be strong and clear

- Any copy on the slide should be brief and applicable to the copy being read during the PSA. Too much copy distracts the viewer from the message being read.

- Do not extend any copy or important part of the slide to the outer edges of the slide. Because of the shape of television screens these outer edges are "lost" to the viewer. The sample guide slide can serve as a reference.

- Your public service director can offer additional advice on

visuals for television.

- Include your agency's name in PSA slides, plus a phone number if possible.

- Slides, films and tapes submitted for broadcast are generally not returned.

- When mailing your slides, package them in corrugated cardboard to prevent glass breakage.

- Submit at least one month in advance of air date.

7. The station's facilities. Many stations are willing to let you use their studios to record your message. Their technical expertise is invaluable; don't hesitate to accept their offer if it fits your schedule. Discuss this possibility with the Public Service Director or with whomever you contact at the outset. Start with your written copy as a basis for your presentation. Know what audience you're aiming at, what simple message you want to express and what you want to ask listeners to do. You can use your best speakers (best public speaker, most interesting, most representative or most attractive person) or stars. You can add music or sound effects.
8. Tapes. Submitting a tape that your organization has made independently has its advantages and disadvantages. And it is only worth the effort if you ascertain in advance that the station is likely to use what you have prepared. You get to use precisely the inflection and timing you want, elements that may be important on, say, a Top-40 station where the jocks read PSAs in the same tone as pimple cream ads. However, you must use professional quality equipment; an \$80 Sony cassette recorder will not do. Requirements vary from station to station, but reel-to-reel two-track tape is nearly the norm.
For TV, you could submit an audio tape plus a color slide.
9. In any case, if your spot is aired, try to get an accounting of how often and when it appeared. Even if the times and frequency were not just what you wanted, *be sure to thank the personnel in writing*. Not just those who lent direct help but the general manager, or owner, too. It will pay off the next time you want to run a PSA.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR ANNOUNCEMENTS

Community calendars (or community billboards) must be non-commercial, like PSAs, but they differ in that they must announce an *event*, not a position or opinion or piece of news. Calendar items tend to be treated rather routinely, although the station has absolute power of discretion and may choose an item of broad appeal before one aimed at small audiences. Here is where media research pays off: if you know your stations and their audience, you won't send

calendar announcements to stations that will ignore them or broadcast them to wholly unsuitable audiences.

Send each announcement to the Public Service Director or calendar contact (check out the name) at least three weeks before you want it read.

Many stations have instructions on the proper way to submit community calendar announcements. Always type your announcement, double-spaced, and limit it to one announcement per page. Keep announcements to 20 seconds at the absolute most; 10 seconds is better. Test-read the announcement; many times an item will read well visually but be difficult to read aloud. Testing will eliminate this possibility.

Be sure *all* salient information is included; stations won't call you to clear up incomplete or confusing announcements. Include time, place, purpose, price of admission (if there is one), where to get tickets, phone number, and the name of your group.

Follow your letter with a phone call to see if and when it will be included in the community calendar. Again, if they do air it, be sure to thank them in writing.

FREE SPEECH MESSAGES

Free speech messages are similar to PSAs but are used to express a position, oppose an action and/or urge support for your own group. Stations have some discretion, but there are very few issues that can be refused FSM air time because they are "too controversial." Many news shows routinely deal with subjects that were formerly hinted at, if they were mentioned at all. Slandorous or blatantly obscene statements are out, as are exhortations to violence. FSMs cannot be used to promote or oppose measures or candidates on the ballot. But anything else is at least technically possible.

FSMs should contain the background of the issue as well as your group's opinion of it. You should clearly identify yourself and your group, and state what action you want from the viewing audience (financial support, letter writing, observe picket lines, etc).

In general, FSMs are limited to 55 seconds (allowing for a tag line at the end identifying it as a FSM and not necessarily the opinion of the station). In all cases, someone you select will go to the station to record the FSM, so a person with a good media image and a good delivery is essential.

Stations are more picky about FSMs than about PSAs, simply because there are fewer of them and they take longer, so be prepared for more rejection. The optimal process for getting them aired is the same as with PSAs—the personal approach. Public Service Directors generally like to feel that FSMs serve the community and public interest and that they provide balance to both commercial messages

and the news. FSMs with immediate release are selected over those about issues that are lying dormant. The more specific you can be, the better.

EDITORIALS AND REBUTTALS

Both radio and TV broadcast editorials usually are delivered by the station or general manager; they tend to be conservative at best. You may ask for rebuttal time even if your group was not directly involved in the editorial, providing you can convince the station that you are a "responsible spokesperson." If your group has even limited credibility it will be difficult for the station to refuse you air time; to do so violates the FCC's Fairness Doctrine and is cause for direct action.

Chances, are, you will be given 60 seconds to reply to the offending statement. Ask for a written copy of the editorial and build your reply around it. Try to be firmly convincing rather than impassioned; the editorial was probably given as if it were the only truth possible—write and deliver yours in the same fashion. Type the copy out in capitals, triple-spaced; this makes for easier reading. *Practice*, alone and before an audience.

In addition to rebuttals, some stations have guest editorials. Use the same procedure that you followed to air your PSAs or FSMs. Treat your proposed editorial as if it were a benefit to the community rather than a favor to your group. Presumably this is true, but be sure to present it in such a mode.

TALK SHOWS

There are great numbers of radio and TV talk shows, but most of them, even the network TV ones, are stuck in other than prime time. Even though they do not reach the greatest number of people, they obviously have some audience appeal or they wouldn't be aired. Besides being inexpensive to produce, they have the element of the unexpected—something that rehearsed shows don't have. Consequently, talk show staffers are always looking for controversial and interesting subjects, and people to espouse them.

If yours is a known, active group, with a timely message to air, you shouldn't have too much trouble getting one of your people on a talk show. Try the following formula:

1. Watch TV and listen to the radio. Familiarize yourself with the various local talk shows. Some hosts are specialists in one field or another and others may be sympathetic or opposed to your point of view (in either case they might be interested).
2. Call the station and simply ask who handles the guest arrangements for that show. Tell them who you are, what your

group is doing, and how valuable and interesting it would be for the community (and their audience) to hear your viewpoint. If you're given the green light get a confirmation in writing and begin to prepare your guest.

3. Send the show succinct material on your group and some suggested topics of discussions so that the host can prepare questions and comments. A biographical sketch of the guest is helpful, particularly if your speaker is a well-known person.
4. Select your guest as if you were the host. Your guest should speak clearly and explain your organization's position succinctly. If possible, the guest should be attractive, persuasive and entertaining. Prepare your guest or guests with all the latest information. If the show will feature people with opposing points of view, or if the host is known to be challenging (and most of them are), make sure you send people who can take it and hand it out. Some people thrive on conflict; others avoid it at all costs. Choose the first kind.
5. Practice with your guest. Shoot difficult questions at them. Make sure they know what two or three important points they will repeat on the show (no matter what is asked), and what they are asking the show's audiences to *do*.
6. Follow up the show with a letter of thanks to the host and to the producer or staff people who have been of assistance.
7. If your group is involved in a really boiling issue, the chances are that talk shows will be very eager to have your people on, and you can use the air time. In this case, have a list of speakers who would be available to appear on shows and call the show to see about scheduling. Sometimes, it's easier to schedule stars, but you must be sure they will hype your organization and not their new movie or act.

If you're planning to make the circuit, make an up-to-date check of what's what. Hosts and producers change; formats and audiences do, too. Make sure you're approaching the right person every time.

FULL PROGRAM PRODUCTIONS

There are some stations that will let you actually produce a show in their studios. Community radio, such as the Pacifica stations, have allocated time and production facilities for such purposes; of course, it's easier to get on if they share your point of view. Public television stations, such as KQED in San Francisco, have open studio shows— $\frac{1}{2}$ -hour per week. There is a good deal of competition for such time, and because of the nature of the shows, they rarely attract large audiences, but such audiences tend to be more activist than general viewers. It's a good deal of effort, but it might be just what you're looking for.

You may be able to persuade a station to co-sponsor an event with your group, and thus get the station to take some responsibility for publicity and for the event itself. Marathons, benefits and other performances are possibilities, if you plan carefully and ask early. Or, someone from your group may offer to appear in a station event (marathon); you may get to make a low-key pitch and line your group up with "the good guys."

GRAPHICS AND REPRODUCTION (PRINTING)

Graphics are an important part of your media campaign. Graphics do not simply "make things pretty"; they capture attention, quickly identify, and offer explanation in ways that text cannot. Graphics enhance and complement virtually every written communication and, at times, they can stand on their own.

Graphics can be a relatively inexpensive way of communicating. With a supply of presstype and tape lines, and with sufficient practice, you can do adequate graphics. For complex design, for hurry-up jobs, and when you can afford the expense, you may want to select an artist who has designed something you like. You may have a member of your group with these skills, or you may be able to trade one of your skills to someone outside the group.

If you or another group member have decided to give it a try, the following list of axioms ought to be consulted and taken, if not literally, then seriously:

1. Before you start anything, look at current display ads and see what catches your eye. You may want to be distinctive, but if your artwork is too bizarre, you'll simply call attention to it, and not to your message.
2. Go to an art supply store and get a free catalog of typefaces—especially those available in transfer type, and study those with an eye toward what will be useful.
3. Establish good relations with a printer; he or she can be a valuable friend and advisor. Most have seen what passes for graphics and can give good advice. Find out if the shop can handle offset, mimeo, silkscreen, or xerox. Find out, ahead of time, how long it will take to print a run.
4. Keep it simple. You want your *message* to be remembered. Don't overdesign. Don't be too arty. Avoid messiness at all costs.
5. Good supplies are a *must*. Don't buy anything you don't need, but of what you need, get the best.
6. Color is expensive. Sometimes one colored ink and a screen to create lighter areas, or a contrasting color of paper, can be just as effective as multi-color printing.
7. Use photos sparingly. Only run a photo if it will illustrate your group or program in some obvious way. It is expensive to make halftones, and you can use line graphics more simply. Printer's screens will give emphasis to any graphic: overlays of concentric circles, wavy lines, checkerboards, or dots can be added with little effort, (but use them sparingly).
8. It's possible to get artwork donated by students and struggling artists. If their work is good, let them put their name on the

- picture or design; it will add to their portfolio.
9. Always have a disinterested party check over your finished product. Proofread everything very carefully. Even the best artists make glaring errors that anyone can see (and it's agonizing to have the wrong date on your expensive posters).
 10. Do the biggest print run you can afford. If you will need 10,000 brochures this year, have them all printed at once, even if it means borrowing the money; you'll save greatly in the long run. It's the initial set-up of a print job that's expensive, and the addition of another 1000 copies often costs little more than the paper.
 11. You are a community group: use your contacts in the community to get things done cheaply. Perhaps you can trade skills for what you need; maybe the printer needs a new wall put in and you have two out-of-work carpenters on your steering committee.

IMAGE AND LOGOS

Since many of your initial contacts with people will be through mailings and official letters, it is essential that you choose and design a communications image that is recognizable and appropriate. And stick with it! Consistency is a virtue in PR. People ought to be able to recognize your letters and mailings simply by the graphics; otherwise they may get easily lost in the shuffle.

To that end, design a logo. Don't spend thousands on something as memorable as the Coca-Cola signature, but make it yours. It can be pictorial, but keep it very simple. Often, just the group's initials, placed in a distinctive way in an appropriate typeface, will suffice. This logo should be on your letterhead stationery, which will probably be your first purchase. If the logo design contains distinctive use of striping or borders, you should make it adaptable to use in flyers, brochures and newsletters as well.

BROCHURES, FLYERS, POSTERS, CALENDARS, NEWSLETTERS, ANNUAL REPORTS

Each of the above is a specialized form of communication that features your group in writing and graphics. To choose which of these forms to prepare, you must know *who* is being sent *what*; otherwise you're wasting paper, ink, and talent, and adding needlessly to the sea of written effluvia.

Your choice also depends on how much energy you can muster. A flyer will take distribution by your group or by mailing (and a mail-crew to apply labels and stamps); for a newsletter or calendar, you need regular staff coordination, as well as a decent mailing list; posters and annual reports can be done once a year, although they

require a great expenditure of energy over a short period of time.

Remember that prospective members, foundation people, or even news media may look at your internal communications for ideas, and will take away an impression of your group. Make everything as neat, intelligent and professional as time permits. Do your basic planning (what you will send, what you will say, how much you will spend) before you approach experts for their assistance. That way, you can make the most effective use of a Neighborhood Arts Program, university volunteer, or graphic artist—to add the final spit and polish.

If you have twenty people who must be informed of some urgent news, unless they live in different countries, the best method is simply to phone them. Ecologically, it's better; a phone call takes up half the energy that delivering a letter does, and it will take less of your time.

For more extensive communications to your membership (i.e. newsletters), you may want to do relatively inexpensive production—xeroxed or mimeographed pages. But you can easily make these pages attractive and readable. Avoid interminable blocks of type: two columns to a page is preferable to one. Use your logo, and decorate pages with photostats of cartoons or drawings, or use reproductions of headlines that mention your group. Tape lines can add readability to a page if used correctly; use them to make boxes for important items, to divide columns, to make a border.

Flyers, brochures, posters, calendars and reports meant for a wider audience are definitely the place to exercise graphic imagination. This is where you must catch the eye of a potentially interested party, particularly with flyers announcing an event, or brochures asking for participation or donations.

Design so that your copy can be easily read, and the reader won't be overwhelmed by the graphics. Use your logo and colored ink or paper to make your flyer or poster stand out. You can use silkscreen, colored mimeo or colored ink for interesting effects without spending a fortune.

For a flyer, you can type copy (preferably in two columns with plenty of white space) on regular or legal-sized paper. Use presstype headlines and subheads, if there's much copy. Print on two sides or one.

For a brochure or poster, you can use more involved graphics, different-sized or heavier weight paper, and folds. Look at some brochures to see the size and format possibilities before you choose one.

Type-setting may totally change the look of your brochure or poster. It makes copy look more professional and fits more words on a page. (You can use presstype for headlines in any case). Notice the different effects you gain by using larger, or different style (i.e. bold or italic) type. An 8 pt. type is small, minimally legible, and should

not be used in bulk or in wide columns; 10 pt. is larger and acceptable for copy if you have plenty of white space; 12 pt. or larger is most legible on a poster or flyer.

TIPS ON WRITING COPY

The copy for your flyer or brochure or poster will work best if you follow these rules:

1. Use your best, most concise writing.
2. Say no more than must be said. Save more complicated messages for other forums.
3. Getting someone's eye and telling them time, date, and place is more important than spelling out your position on every issue.
4. Use short, simple sentences; group ideas together and use headlines, graphics and boxes to break up blocks of copy.
5. Use *symbols* to indicate your group's community support:
 - a. Your board members
 - b. Endorsers, staffers, supporters
 - c. A peace symbol, a farmworker's symbol, American Legion logo; all tell something about your group *at a glance*.
6. Be sure that the Who, What, Where, When and Why are placed clearly and can be easily noted.
7. Have it proofread.

ANNUAL REPORTS

An annual report can serve as a brochure for your organization all year, or it can be a simple members-only item. If you don't have the sustained energy to produce a regular newsletter or calendar to reach your members or users, then it might be worth your energy to do one good annual report that will supplant or supplement your brochures. Like a brochure, an annual report can go to foundations, to prospective donors, and to members. A good annual report can also be a morale-booster for your staff and members.

You can show what you've done in the last year, whom you've served, what you intend to do. You can use photos to illustrate the range of your constituency, the breadth of your activities, your staff skills. You can include your budget (showing how much you do on so little money), and indicate how you'll spend new money responsibly.

A TIME TABLE FOR GRAPHICS

1. Target the due date. You want printed copies:
 - a. 3-4 weeks before a bulk mailing
 - b. 2-3 weeks before an event (for handouts)
 - c. 2-3 days before leafletting
2. Allow 2-3 days for pasteups by a graphic artist (member or outside artist).

3. Allow at least a week for printing. Instant print runs of up to 500 can be done in two days. Neighborhood Arts or other institutional printing may take two weeks.
4. Allow 3-4 days to design a fancy brochure; 1-2 days for a simple brochure or flyer.
5. Allow 4 days for typesetting and a day or two for typing.
6. Calculate when your clean, edited, finished copy is due at typesetter's, typist or graphic artist's, and then . . .
7. Allow at least a week to write, re-write and proofread the copy. You must also allow time to get your ideas clear and to have the copy approved, if necessary. Once the copy is typed or typeset, changes are expensive to make.

SLIDE SHOWS

Slide shows are a dynamic form of graphics that can be used in many ways: as organizing tools, for fundraising, or to add credibility to an argument or issue. They can offer an experience not available by words or paper graphics alone, and they can broaden a simple lecture. However, a good slide show requires the diligent attention of a coordinator from your group to determine how it will say what you want and how it will reflect your organization's needs.

Slide shows are generally produced with a taped sound track that can, with the use of an inexpensive cuing device, advance the slides automatically. These self-contained shows can be offered to other groups easily; they can be sent through the mail. Or, your show can be slides with a written script that can be read aloud at the presentation.

Media centers in big cities are often willing to assist with slide production, or to do the job for you. But, the major work in a slide show is *pre-production*, which brings the medium within reach of most groups willing to put in the time and effort required to think it through. Your group must decide on the audience and what information you want to communicate.

A slide show is created from a script with the visuals added later; it's much more difficult to get the pictures and fit the show around them.

1. When you decide on an audience and a theme, you must be able to state both in one present-tense, declarative sentence.
2. List all the information you want to convey in the show. You will have only 10 to 15 minutes, so prioritize.
3. List your possible speakers or narrators. Indigenous people—those who are involved in the action of your group—make effective speakers if you can get them; but actors' voices also make them desirable candidates.
4. List music and background sounds you will want to use.
5. Give the writer the script ideas. Get a sample treatment, review

approval, and a timetable for completion. Have him or her include slide descriptions in the sample, and a few paragraphs on how the rest of the show will be treated.

6. Review the treatment and have it approved by your leadership. Make all changes *before* recording sound or photos.
7. The sound is recorded.
8. The photographer shoots the pictures.
9. Get your copies together and distribute them.
10. Technical assistance. After you have followed the above steps, you may want technical assistance to clear up your concepts, to smooth out your writing, or to suggest short-cuts in assembly or production. Some sources of this assistance are:
 - a. Production agencies
 - b. Public relations agencies.
 - c. University film departments.

Ask how much each kind of assistance will cost. Remember that supplies and professional time are expensive; but your pre-planning will have saved you much of the time and expense.

SAMPLES



United Way

NEWS RELEASE

621 South Virgil Avenue - Los Angeles - 90005

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SAMPLE - NEWSCONFERENCE
ANNOUNCEMENT

MEDIA CONTACT: BRAD SALES
(213) 736-1325

MEDIA ADVISORY - NEWSCONFERENCE

Voluntary Sector Initiates Major Effort
To Manage L.A. Emergency Food and Shelter Crisis

WHEN: May 11, 1983 at 9:30 a.m.

WHERE: Sunlight Mission (1/2 block South of Santa Monica freeway.
Use the Cloverfield off-ramp.)
1754 14th Street
Santa Monica, CA
(213) 450-8802

WHAT: United Way officials will announce a major effort by the voluntary sector to deal with the crisis of emergency food and shelter in Los Angeles County. Plans for Los Angeles' share of a precedent setting \$50 million federal grant to the voluntary sector for emergency food and shelter will be discussed. (This is the first money from the recently passed \$4.9 billion jobs bill to hit the streets in Los Angeles). Also, new facts on the status of emergency shelter from the only study of its kind ever conducted in Los Angeles County will be presented. (This study found, for example, that the most desperate need is for shelters for women and children.)

VISUALS: The Sunlight Mission is one of the few facilities which provides shelter to women and children as well as "intact" families. The shelter has a dormitory, kitchen and a day room and a family staying at the mission will be available for interviews following the newsconference.

SAMPLE - Informational
NewsRelease

ELECTRICITY AND GAS FOR PEOPLE (E&GP)
...turn PG&E around...
2831 7th St.
Berkeley, CA

Contact: Susan Halas 824-3267/885-0204
Judy Bloom 845-0364

April 19, 1974

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ELECTRICITY AND GAS FOR PEOPLE TO CHALLENGE PG&E AT ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS MEETING, TUES., APRIL 23, 2 PM, AUDITORIUM, 77 BEALE ST., SAN FRANCISCO

An E&GP delegation representing 2,500 shares of PG&E stock will protest skyrocketing utility rates on the floor of the annual meeting of PG&E stockholders, Tues., April 23, 2 pm in the auditorium of PG&E headquarters, 77 Beale St., San Francisco.

A march, headed by Mike Miller, E&GP chairman and other members of the delegation, will begin at 12:30 p.m. at Bank of America Plaza, California & Kearny, passing major corporate headquarters enroute to the stockholders meeting where both inside and outside actions are planned.

E&GP, the citizens' action group which recently turned out over 400 angry consumers at Public Utilities Commission hearings and has vocally protested the PUC secret meeting policy, expects even wider public participation in this event. Actions by E&GP have already cut \$30 million off the currently pending almost 1/2 billion dollar rate increase requested by PG&E.

Said Tim Sampson, an active member of the organization, "In New York and Boston over 16,000 people are refusing to pay their utility bills in response to these outrageous rate hikes. What will it take to convince PG&E that even a giant monopoly must be responsible to the people?"

****PHOTO DESKS NOTE****The PG&E Octopus--Profit Greed & Exploitation--will make his debut during the afternoon. Also on hand will be the Golden Calf (an exact replica of the one denounced by Moses). The first annual Golden Calf Award representing "private gain at the public expense" has been presented to PG&E Chairman Shermer Sibley.

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SAMPLE - Fact Sheet

City Working Women

a caucus of CSA 400

770 Golden Gate, San Francisco 94102 673-8761

CONTACT: SUSAN HALAS
673-8755 or 824-8091

October 8, 1974

FACT SHEET: TELEPHONE OPERATORS PAY AND BENEFITS

CITY OF SAN FRANCISCO	PRIVATE SECTOR (PT&T)
Gross Salary Range \$6,968--\$8,478	\$7,124--\$9,802
Benefits:	
State Disability Insurance None	Full coverage
State Unemployment Insurance None	Full coverage
Night Differential \$1.67/night--\$2.03/night	Substantially higher
Transportation home None	Cabfare provided by company
Upgrading: Slow notification of available positions. Must meet arbitrary requirements take exam.	Transfer requests may be submitted for specific jobs after six months of employment

FOR ADDITIONAL RESEARCH OR STATISTICAL INFORMATION
ON THE PUBLIC SECTOR CALL: VIC THURSEN 673-8755

Additional information available on pension and retirement

Source: SEIU contract

SAMPLE - Public Service Announcements

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
JULY 20, 1977
(to be run until August 8, 1977)

CONTACT: Janet Kagan
626-4030

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

20 seconds

In case you waited too long to buy your tickets for A Chorus Line, Consumer Action and T.U.R.N. have the last available seats--600 of them! The performance is on Sunday, September 4th. All tickets are on a first come/first serve basis; and are tax-deductible. For ticket information call 626-4030. That's 626-4030.

- 30 -

20 seconds

A Chorus Line is NOT sold out! San Francisco Consumer Action and T.U.R.N. have tickets for their benefit performance, Sunday, September 4th. 600 seats are waiting for you on a first come/first serve basis, and are tax-deductible. For ticket information, call 626-4030. That's 626-4030.

- 30 -

SAMPLE - Free Speech Message

ELECTRICITY AND GAS FOR PEOPLE (E&GP)
"Turn PG&E around..."
212 Fair Oaks
San Francisco, CA 94110

Contact:
Media: Susan Halas 824-3267
397-9962
Other: Mike Miller 648-6402
658-4834

PUBLIC OPINION MESSAGE/FREE SPEECH MESSAGE 60 Seconds

AFTER ELEVEN RATE INCREASES LAST YEAR PG&E IS ASKING THE STATE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION TO INCREASE YOUR GAS & ELECTRICITY RATES AGAIN TO THE TUNE OF \$233 MILLION, WHICH WILL COST THE AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD AN ADDITIONAL \$40/ YEAR IN UTILITIES BILLS.

WE'VE HAD ENOUGH. NOW IT'S TIME FOR THE LITTLE GUY TO TALK BACK. THAT'S WHY WE'VE ORGANIZED THE CAMPAIGN TO TURN PG&E AROUND. IF YOU'RE TIRED OF PAYING MORE AND MORE, JOIN WITH US IN PROTESTING THE RATE HIKES TO THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION AT THEIR HEARINGS ON FEBRUARY 4TH, 5TH AND 6TH.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL ELECTRICITY AND GAS FOR PEOPLE (E&GP) 648-6402. OR IN THE EAST BAY, 658-4834 (THOSE NUMBERS AGAIN 648-6402, EAST BAY, 658-4834). STOP THE RATE INCREASE. ELECTRICITY AND GAS FOR PEOPLE. TURN PG&E AROUND.